**County tightens budgetary purse**

Property-tax reform could bring $20 million hit

By Jeff Burlew

Leon County has frozen some construction, new hires and staff travel for four months in response to property-tax reform that could dramatically reduce revenue.

Projects that are not under construction, including the Lake Jackson branch library and an Emergency Medical Services building, will be put on hold. Projects that are under construction, including the Woodville community center, will continue.

The hiring freeze is for all positions except those that affect essential services. The tax reform measure, being talked about among state officials and legislators, could mean a $20 million hit to the county's budget.

"I believe that no matter what, something is going to pass the Legislature," County Administrator Parkez Alan said. "And I think all counties really should very seriously start looking at how they are going to deal with it. And unless we start evaluating it right now... it may be too late."

Alam said the county Commission will meet at 11:30 a.m. today on the fifth floor of the County Courthouse, 301 S. Monroe St.

**Company gets green light for Capital Circle SE widening**

By Julian Pecquet

Six lanes of traffic will one day flow between Woodville Highway and SouthWood following a decision Monday by Blueprint 2000 to award a contract for Capital Circle Southeast's widening to local firm Sanders.

But the 12 city and county commissioners who make up the agency's voting body weren't united over a controversial decision to widen Capital Circle Southwest, on the other side of town, because of concerns that the proposal would harm nearby Cascade Lake. The Blueprint 2000 agency uses sales-tax dollars to pay for road and environmental projects.

The Sanders contract was greeted as a boon for the south side, where a new St. Joe development proposal for 2,000 homes, retail space and a hospital was introduced last summer.

"We know everything is going to change dramatically, but there's nothing you can do about it," said Robert Lindsey, a gas station maintenance worker at Woodville Highway and Capital Circle. Please see ROAD, 2A.

**Seven Days festival culminates with African harmony**

By Kati Schardt

The chorugraphy was colorful, the music was electric and the singing was spirited.

But most of all, the Seventh Days at the Florida State Fair were a celebration of African heritage.

**Families face problem of file surplus,energy-loss tax**

By Diane Hsia

More than 1,300 students are on the University of Florida's waiting list for this semester, which is five times what was predicted on time.

How will the school resolve the issue of missing students paying fees? The bookkeeper has asked the students to pay full tuition, eat in the Interim President Bryant's office at the University of Florida's boning.

By now, the school has run through 700 "on-der" and 10,000 "off-der" files used to verify the regular pay day.

Please read more at the Tallahassee.com.
ROAD
From Page 1A

Circle Southeast. "I feel like it's a good thing because now that you have more traffic coming, it'll be harder to rob these stores."

County Commissioner Bill Proctor, a supporter of the St. Joe development, welcomed the news.

"By putting that infrastructure," he said, "it establishes public commitment there to facilitate further commercial and residential growth. It's a great signal, a tremendous signal."

The Sandco segment goes from Woodville Highway to Tram Road. At about $28 million — including right-of-way acquisition — the project will cost $7 million less than planned thanks to a drop in construction costs.

Sandco President Steve Ghazvini chalked the price drop to the leveling off of gas and other costs at a time when construction has slowed. He said the project should take less than three years, with construction possibly starting in three months.

While that project was well received, five members of the agency — Tallahassee Commissioner Debbie Lightsey and Leon County commissioners Bob Raskin, Cliff Thaele, John Dallas and Jane Sauls — opposed the planned widening of Capital Circle Southwest along its current route to the airport. They said water run-off from the construction site could harm nearby Cascade Lake, and that the agency should wait for the results of a study that's under way.

But the majority of commissioners voted to move forward with that design and with right-of-way acquisition, saying a wider route to the airport was vital for economic development. The agency will have a chance to review the project before construction begins.

Contact reporter Julian Pequet at (850) 599-2307 or jlp@tallahassee.com.

Lottery results

FLORIDA LOTTERY
WINNING NUMBERS FOR 2/26/07

CASH 3:
2/26-36-2
2/26-12-8
2/26-5-80

PLAY 4:
2/26-36-2-8
2/26-12-8-5
2/26-5-80-2

FANTASY 5:
2/26-9-24-33-36
2/26-12-8-5-80

LOTTO 2/24:
4/10-23-35-40-48

For lottery information, call (850) 487-7777.

GEORGIA LOTTERY

CASH 3: (Noon)
2/26-9-0
2/26-5-87

CASH 3: (Night)
2/26-9-0
2/26-5-87

CASH 4: (Noon)
2/26-34-02
2/26-34-02

CASH 4: (Night)
2/26-34-02
2/26-34-02

FANTASY 5:
2/26-9-24-33-36
2/26-12-8-5-80

WIN FOR LIFE:
2/24-8-11-15-22-32 Free Ball: 24

MEGA MILLIONS:
2/23-3-12-21-39-50 — 43

For more on Florida Fantasy 5 and Georgia Fantasy 5, see Page 2B.

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